

Animas River from the Northern Border of New Mexico to Navajo Nation

Surface water samples were collected at nine (9) locations south of Colorado along the Animas River and the San Juan River of New Mexico on August 9th and 10th, 2015. The results for the dissolved (filtered) metals surface water samples indicate that all nine locations were less than the screening levels for drinking water (maximum contaminant limits (MCLs)). The dissolved metal concentrations were less than screening levels for recreation, aquatic life (acute and chronic), livestock, and irrigation of crops. The dissolved metal concentration in surface water represents the fraction of metals that are bioavailable. This bioavailable portion represents the fraction of metals that can cross the gills of fish and the cell membranes of aquatic organisms.

The results for total metals (unfiltered) surface water samples indicate that all nine locations were less than screening levels with the exception of MCLs for lead. The dissolved (filtered) surface water samples were less than the MCL and the recreational scenarios such as hiker/camper for lead. The normal treatment of water by water supply operators will remove most of the arsenic and lead from the water. What is left after treatment will be the dissolved (filtered) surface water.

Sampling has shown a downward trend toward pre-event conditions.